

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: SHUM GV PINT SOCI
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS IN DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE RECIPIENT
COUNTRIES: GUINEA

REF: STATE 014518

1. POLITICAL SITUATION. GUINEA IS A ONE-PARTY DICTATORSHIP DOMINATED BY PRESIDENT AHMED SEKOU TOURE. ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVITY IS STRICTLY PRESCRIBED AND REGULATED. THE NATION IS KEPT IN A STATE OF UNENDING RHETORICAL REVOLUTION, BESIEGED BY IMPLACABLE, LOOSELY DEFINED IMPERIALIST ENEMIES. NO OPPOSITION PARTIES OR GROUPINGS ARE PERMITTED, AND DISSENT IS FORCEFULLY SUPPRESSED. PERIODICAL VIGILANCE CAMPAIGNS AND PURGES OF SUSPECTED OFFICIALS REINFORCE PARTY-STATE DISCIPLINE.

2. LEGAL SITUATION. THE STILL-UNABROGATED 1958 CONSTITUTION GUARANTEES FREEDOM OF VOTE, ASSEMBLY, SPEECH, CONSCIENCE, PRESS, DOMICILE, ASSOCIATION AND LABOR UNION ACTION, AND RULES OUT ARBITRARY ARREST AND DETENTION. MOST OF THESE RIGHTS ARE CONDITIONED BY LEGISLATION, PARTY (PDG) RULES, AND DECREES; NONE ARE OBSERVED IN PRACTICE. "RADICALIZATION OF THE REVOLUTION" IS CONSIDERED TO HAVE LED GUINEA GENERALLY BEYOND THE STAGE FRAMED BY
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THE CONSTITUTION. SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL CASES ARE HANDLED BY A HIGH-LEVEL "REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE" WHICH REPORTS TO PRESIDENT TOURE. THE COMMITTEE IS OUTSIDE THE JURIDICAL MACHINERY, AND ITS ACCUSED HAVE NO LEGAL SAFEGUARDS. ITS PURPOSE IS TO OBTAIN CONFESSIONS CONSISTENT WITH A USUALLY PRE-ARRANGED SCENARIO. IT IS GUIDED BY THE PRESIDENT ACCORDING TO HIS DEFINITION

OF THE PEOPLE'W ILL AND NOT BY LAW. THE REGULAR JUDICIAL ANDPOLICE APPARATUS IS SIMILARLY SUBORDINATE TO POLITICAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE REVOLUTION AND PARTY, AND ENJOYS NO INDEPENDENCE. VIGILANCE CAMPAIGNS AGAINST "FIFTH COLUMNISTS", "TRAITORS" AND "MERCENARIES" MAKE DISPASSIONATE LEGALISTY IMPOSSIBLE. THE NUMBER OF POLITICAL PRISONERS IS CURRENTLY ESTIMATED AT 2500-3000.

3. OFFICIAL ATTITUDES. GUINEAN DOCTRINE SCORNS LIBERAL PARLIAMENTARIANISM AND WESTERN NORMS OF CIVIL RIGHTS AS FRAUDULENT PRETEXTS FOR "IMPERIALIST" OR MIDDLE CLASS DOMINATION. INSTEAD, "REVOLUTIONARY MORALITY" PREVAILS IN GUINEA. ITS SOLE CRITERIA IS DEFENSE OF AND LYAALTY TO AHMED SEKOU TOURE AND PDG DECISIONS, BY WHICH THE PEOPLE'S COLLECTIVE WILL AND "TRUE" FREEDOM ARE ALLEGEDLY MANIFEST. PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF CIVIL RIGHTS FOCUSES ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY ON SOUTH AFRICA AND APARTHEID AND ITS DENIAL OF RIGHTS TO BLACKS. FEW LEGAL SAFEGUARDS EXIST TO PROTECT INTEGRITY OF INDIVIDUALS, PARTICULARLY THOSE CHARGED POLITICALLY WITH TREASON, PLOTTING, FIFTH-COLUMN ACTIVITY, SMUGGLINE, CORRUPTION OR ANTI-REVOLUTIONARY BEHAVIOR. TORTURE IS SYSTEMATICALLY USED UNDER TOP-LEVEL SANCTION DURING PURGES WHEN TAILORED CONFESSIONS ARE REQUIRED. POLITICAL PRISONERS FIND PRISON CONDITIONS BARELY SUFFICIENT TO SUSTAIN LIFE DURING INTERROGATION, SEVERE BUT TOLERABLE OTHERWISE. LENGTH OF POLITICAL DETENTION OR IMPRISONMENT IS ARBITRARY, OFTEN INDEFINITE, AND RARELY STIPULATED TO THE ACCUSED. PUBLIC FLOGGING AND THE DEATH PENALTY FOR THIEVERY OR OTHER

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MISDEMEANORS ARE NOT UNCOMMON. OFFICIAL POLICY OPPOSES RACISM OR RACIAL DISCRIMINATION; HOWEVER IN 1976 TOURE CHARGED THE FOULAH (OR "PEULH") TRIBE, AS A GROUP, WITH DISLOYALTY, AND MANY FOULAHS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED OR HAVE LOST THEIR POSITIONS OR STATUS IN THE PARTY-STATE APPARATUS. GOG CONTROLS EMIGRATION AS TIGHTLY AS IT CAN, BUT A LONG BUSH BORDER ALLOWS A GREAT DEAL OF UNAUTHORIZED TRAVEL, AND MORE THAN ONE MILLION GUINEANS (AT LEAST ONE FIFTH OF POPULATION) HAVE FLED SINCE INDEPENDENCE IN 1958. MUSLIM RELIGIOUS WORSHIP IS ENCOURAGED AND WIDELY PRACTICED AS LONG AS CONGREGATIONS PROFESS LOYALTY TO REGIME. CHRISTIAN WORSHIP ON VERY SMALL SCALE IS TOLERATED. PRIVATE PROPERTY (HOUSES, PLOTS, CARS PERSONAL GOODS) IS ALLOWED BUT PRIVATE COMMERCE IS NOT. IN PRACTICE, PROPERTY MAY BE CONFISCATED ON VARIOUS PRETEXTS. AS REGARDS THOUGHT, PARTY DOCTRINE STATES, "NO SECTOR OF ACTIVITY ESCAPES THE VIGILANT EYE OF THE PARTY WHICH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ELABORATING THE COLLECTIVE THOUGHT." REGIME JUSTIFIES ITS METHODS BY ITS GOALS;

POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE, ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT, ABSOLUTE
EQUALITY, DEMOCRATIC AND SOCIAL PROGRESS. IN REALITY IT
IS UNDER CONSIDERABLE SOVIET INFLUENCE. GUINEA'S
ECONOMY REMAINS MORIBUND DESPITE EXCEPTIONAL NATURAL RESOURCES,
AGRICULTURE POTENTIAL, AND IMPROVING EXCHANGE
EARNINGS FROM MINERAL SALES.

4. AVAILABLE NON-GOVERNMENTAL REPORTING. AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL'S YEARLY REPORTS ON GUINEA HAVE BEEN THIN
AND HAMPERED BY LACK OF DOCUMENTATION. TESTIMONY OF EX-
FRENCH AND GERMAN POLITICAL PRISONERS IS LARGELY
UNPUBLISHED. MOST RECENT (DECEMBER 1976) IS PRISON
D'AFRIQUE, BY JEAN-PAUL ALATA, SUPPRESSED IN FRANCE. AFRICAN
FRANCOPHONE JOURNALS -- VOIX D'AFRIQUE, AFRICA, JEUNE AFRIQUE,
SOLEIL -- ARE USEFUL SOURCES. SEE PARTICULARLY AFRICA,
NOV 76 AND DEC 76; TIME, AUG 16, 76. PARIS-BASED ANTI-GOG
EXILE GROUPS HAVE REGULARLY SUPPLIED INFORMATION OF VARYING
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